

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
OFFICE OF POLLUTION PREVENTION AND TOXICS
1200 Pennsylvania NW, MC 7409M
Washington, DC 20460

TITLE: **Request for proposals to Support the Pollution Prevention Information Network**
Funding opportunity number EPA-OPPT/PPD- 03-01

SUMMARY: EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics expects to have approximately \$200,000.00 available in fiscal year 2003, subject to the availability of funds at the time of award. The Office expects to fund two or more proposals that would support the nation-wide network of pollution prevention information providers. The Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 provides for funding to States to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of State technical assistance programs in providing source reduction information to businesses. The Pollution Prevention Information Network (PPIN) grants seek to coordinate work among technical assistance providers to minimize duplication of effort and improve information collection, synthesis and dissemination, and training for the promotion of pollution prevention (P2) techniques. This notice describes the procedures and criteria for the award of these grants.

DATES: Letters of intent to apply should be received by March 21, 2003.
All proposals must be received on or before April 21, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND APPLICATION MATERIALS CONTACT:
Beth Anderson, Pollution Prevention Division (7409M), Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460-0001, telephone number: (202) 564-8833; fax number: (202) 564-8899; e-mail address: Anderson.Beth@epa.gov.

ADDRESSES: Proposals may be submitted electronically, by mail or through hand delivery/courier.

1. *Electronically.* By e-mail to : Anderson.Beth@epa.gov. If you submit an electronic proposal, include your name, mailing address, an e-mail address and phone number. Also include this contact information on the outside of any disk or CD ROM you submit, and in any cover letter accompanying the disk or CD ROM. This ensures that you can be identified as the submitter of the proposal and allows EPA to contact you in case EPA cannot read your proposal due to technical difficulties or needs further information.

2. *By mail.* Send your proposal to: Beth Anderson, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, Mail Code 7409M, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460-0001.

3. *By hand delivery or courier.* Deliver your proposal to: Beth Anderson, USEPA -East Room 5213, 1201 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20004.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I Funding Opportunities

1. *Program history.* EPA awarded nine grants in response to the first Federal Register notice on the establishment of a Pollution Prevention Information Network (P2IN) published on February 5, 1997 (62 FR 5393) (FRL-5582-5). The 9 grantees represented all 10 of the USEPA Regions. These regional P2 information centers were usually only partially funded by this grant program and represent a variety of organizations. Some of the grantees were also funded by other Federal technical assistance programs, such as the Small Business Administration, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership, State and Local governments, or their Regional EPA office. The first solicitation for this grant program was intended to establish new regional centers (where needed) or give additional funds to existing centers to: (1) improve communication among centers, (2) minimize duplication of efforts in creating and disseminating P2 information, and (3) promote information standards that would facilitate P2 information dissemination nationwide.

Over the first two years of the grant program (1998 and 1999), grantees enhanced networking among centers and improved nationwide interaction on P2 information projects through monthly conference calls, biannual meetings, websites, listserves and databases. Frequent communication built familiarity with other regional resources and their mode of operation. The grantees formed a group called the "Pollution Prevention Resource Exchange" (P2Rx). More information about the P2Rx centers can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.p2rx.org>. For more detail on the projects the group is working on, check out this link: <http://www.p2rx.org/AdminInfo/toc.cfm> and click on "Action Plans-By Project" in the left hand column.

After the second Federal Register Notice was published on November 12, 1999 (64 FR 61637) (FRL-6391-3), eight regional centers were funded. All of the grantees had been previously funded under the first solicitation, so there was continuity in the collaborative efforts between the centers, and in support for the state and local governments being served.

2. *Pollution Prevention Information Network coordinator.*—i. *Funding.* For this activity, proposals may range from \$80,000.00 to 120,000.00 per year. Proposals should be written to cover 2 or 3 years. Only one cooperative agreement will be awarded for this activity area, subject to the availability of funds at the time of the award. Substantial involvement by EPA in the cooperative agreement may include: the EPA project officer participating in monthly conference calls, consulting on meeting and conference call agendas, participation in standards discussion, or attending meetings. Incremental awards could be made each year, subject to the availability of funds at the time of the award. Only new awards will be made under this announcement, no supplemental awards are available.

ii. *The P2IN coordinator.* In the past, one of the regional centers has served as the coordinator for activities and collaboration of all 8 regional information centers, with a two year

term of service. New applicants are encouraged to apply under this solicitation. New proposals for the coordinator position may be two or three years. Terms of the outgoing and incoming coordinators should over-lap. Presently the outgoing Coordinator job will end in December 2003, so the incoming coordinator would start in October, 2003 to allow for a smooth transition of these services.

The coordinator performs tasks such as: facilitating frequent communication among the P2IN regional centers (also known as P2Rx centers), developing consensus among the centers, coordinating sub committees and the development of standards, and providing meeting and training services for center staff. In addition the coordinator organizes monthly calls for a number of committees, coordinates development and maintenance of regional center services, and addresses other needs as they arise. The performance of the coordinator is reviewed by the Regional Center Directors and USEPA at least once a year.

iii. Prior regional center coordinators have carried out these tasks:

- Coordinate and direct group tasks and information sharing among the regional centers through monthly conference calls, e-mail, operation of website and organizes at least two face-to-face meetings per year.
- Facilitate subcommittee activities and coordinate actions to resolve issues identified.
- Facilitate the standards setting process among centers in order to develop standards for regional center services and projects such as: the Programs Database, Topic Hub, or other appropriate collaborative products.
- Assist with the promotion of the regional P2 information network to increase use of services and information currently offered.
- Facilitate resource sharing between regional centers.
- Direct development, expansion and integration of the web site, www.p2rx.org, with other regional centers.
- Compile activity and web measures from each regional center to create aggregate report of national P2 information services provided every six months.

3. *Support of the Pollution Prevention Information Network –i. Funding.* For this activity, proposals may request no more than \$30,000.00 per year. Proposals may range between \$10,000.00 and \$30,000.00, depending on the activities proposed and may span one or two years of work. Proposals may focus on one or more of the following areas: measurement and reporting of P2 information services and activities, design and implementation of new P2 information products or services, and the promotion of existing or new P2 information services or products. The number of assistance agreement awarded may range from one to four, depending on the proposals received and subject to the availability of funds at the time of the award. Incremental awards could be made each year, if proposals are for two years. Only new awards will be made under this announcement, no supplemental awards are available.

ii. *Other P2 Information Network activities.* EPA is inviting proposals from the existing Pollution Prevention Resource Exchange (P2Rx) centers as well as requesting new applicants, who will coordinate their proposed work with the existing centers. EPA is seeking proposals that will contribute to the organization and efficient retrieval of P2 information nationwide. New

applicants will work with existing centers and provide their own unique areas of expertise as part of their national collaboration. For example: P2Rx centers have developed agreements on database structure, database fields, keywords and use of P2 Thesaurus to facilitate P2 information sharing nationally. New applicants should agree to use these same standards. For more information of P2rx standards see: <http://www.p2rx.org/AdminInfo/toc.cfm>- the right hand column shows administrative standards and adopted standards.

EPA continues to seek more cooperation among State pollution prevention programs and the other assistance providers. Partnerships are encouraged with state, regional and national programs such as: National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership programs, Compliance Assistance Centers, EPA's Small Business Assistance Programs, and the Small Business Development Centers.

Proposals should describe how tasks will encourage source reduction to prevent pollution across all environmental media: air, water, and land. Applicants should identify the area(s) of pollution prevention expertise they will develop and how they will measure the effectiveness of each proposed task. Many of the EPA regional offices have negotiated measurement systems with their states. These systems may provide some appropriate measures for proposed tasks. Applicants should propose some way of utilizing State representatives to guide, evaluate, and provide feedback on the information services the applicant is proposing.

There are three general areas of activities will be considered for funding. One area or more may be addressed in a single proposal.

a. *Develop new P2 information products or services.* Proposals could describe how new P2 information products or innovative technologies will be developed and shared.

b. *Develop reporting measures.* Proposals could address measurement of the access to P2 information products or services. These measurements would indicate interest and use of these products. Could include collecting and synthesizing measurements from a 2 or 5 year period, document changes in P2 information availability and services, such as conferences, trainings, web sites and listservers, etc.

c. *Develop and implement marketing plan.* Proposals could support development and/or implementation of a P2 information marketing plan to promote P2 information and related services.

II Eligibility

1. *Applicants.* Eligible applicants include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, any territory or possession of the United States, public and private universities and colleges and other public or private nonprofit institutions. Applicants should work as part of a nationwide service, make their information products available electronically, and publically report use of their services.

2. *Activities.* Proposals should address one or more of the funding opportunities described above and listed briefly here:

a. *Pollution Prevention Information Network coordinator.* Applicants should clearly identify the services that will be provided to the P2IN centers by the coordinator. These services should include: setting up and helping conducts meetings for the centers, conference calls, facilitating and/or drafting P2 information product standards or reporting measures for the

centers, and providing facilitation for discussions among regional P2 information centers.

b. *Other P2 Information Network Activities.* Applicants should clearly describe how their proposal will contribute to and improve access to P2 information and services. Proposals should include at least one of the following areas: work in measurement of P2 information activities and services, promotion of P2 information resources, or development of new P2 information services or products.

III. Matching Requirements

There is a match requirement of 5% of the total cooperative agreement project costs. Assistance agreements will be awarded under the authority of Section 10 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (EPA delegation 1-60).

IV. Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance

The number assigned to this program in the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance is 66.606, title "Surveys, Studies, Investigations and Special Purpose Grants".

V. Application Process and Content

1. *Preapplication Coordination.* The Standard Form 424, 424A, and other forms as provided by the Environmental Protection Agency must be used for this program. Forms can be obtained by calling the contact listed above or at the URL:<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>. This program is eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs" (and the review requirements of Section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act). An applicant should consult the Office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her State for more information on the process the State requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if the State has selected the program for review. The single point of contact must notify in writing, within 30 days of the Federal Register Notice announcing availability of funds, the Grants Administration Division of the Environmental Protection Agency whether their State's official E.O. 12372 process will review applications in this program.

2. *Preapplication Assistance.* Federal forms that should be included in the proposal are: Application for Federal assistance OMB form 424; Budget information form 424A; Construction assurances form 424B; Certification regarding debarment, etc form 5700-49; Certification regarding lobbying; and EPA Civil rights form 4700-4. Forms can be obtained at the URL:<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>. Requests for forms, examples of currently funded cooperative agreements, or other pre-application assistance should be made to the contact listed above under the heading "For Further Information".

3. *Application Content.* The proposal should not exceed fifteen pages in length (exclusive of tables and attachments). The basic contents of a proposal should:

- i. Identify the lead agency applying for funds, other involved agencies and key contacts
- ii. Describe the problem or issues the proposal will address and justify why these activities should be a priority.
- iii. Summarize the project strategy, objectives, goals and measures of success. Describe

any partnerships that are part of the approach.

iv. Provide a schedule which specifies the tasks, estimated cost, deliverables, and estimated completion dates.

v. Include a budget indicating the funding requested and the matching resources for the proposal.

vi. Describe the experience of key project personnel and the organization's capabilities and experience as it relates to the proposed tasks.

vii. Provide the specific format for reporting measures or activities that reflect the effectiveness of each of the proposed tasks.

VI. Review Process

A national panel, comprised of EPA representatives from both Headquarters and the EPA Regions, will evaluate each proposal. EPA will review all proposals for quality, strength and completeness against the criteria described below.

1. *Criteria for selecting a proposal.* Acceptable proposals must meet the applicant eligibility requirements in this notice. Listed below are 7 criteria used to evaluate proposals. Proposals may receive up to 100 points maximum.

i. *Project description and justification.* The proposal presents a clear description of the issues which will be addressed. Justification is provided for the tasks. 15 points.

ii. *Project objectives.* The proposal specifies realistic tasks and objectives to address the issues identified in the proposal. 10 points.

iii. *Project strategy.* The proposal includes a well-conceived strategy to address the tasks and objectives, including a proposed schedule for execution of the objectives associated with each task. 15 points.

iv. *Project management.* The proposal identifies and describes qualifications of key personnel. Senior management within the applicant organization and other participating organizations are committed to the tasks and will monitor progress. 15 points.

v. *Identified measures for project.* The proposal contains clear measures of success. Proposals identify criteria used to track the effectiveness of each proposed task and include the specific format for reporting measures. 20 points.

vi. *Budget.* The proposal includes a budget indicating the funding requested and the matching resources. The description demonstrates effective and judicious use of Federal funds. 15 points.

vii. *Partnerships.* Proposals leverage expertise of other assistance providers to reduce duplication of effort. 10 points.

2. *Anticipated award date.* Assistance agreements will be awarded by September 30, 2003. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards. Any dispute will follow the process in accordance with 40 CFR 30.63 and Part 31, subpart F.

VII. Post Award Reporting

1. *Reports:* Organizations that are awarded grant funds will be required to submit semi-annual progress reports, during the life of the project, to the EPA Project Officer and EPA

Headquarters coordinator. Each report will summarize funds expended, tasks accomplished, and results achieved to date. A specific format for reporting P2 information center activities (<http://www.p2rx.org/AdminInfo/activityMe.cfm>) and web site usage (<http://www.p2rx.org/AdminInfo/WebMeasure.cfm>) have been developed. A summary final grant report will also be due 90 days after the end of the project period. This final report should include a discussion of the prospects for continuation, project evaluation and future direction.

2. *Audits.* Periodic audits should be made as part of the recipient's system of financial management and internal control to meet terms and conditions of grants and other agreements. In accordance with the provisions of OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations," nonfederal entities that receive financial assistance of \$300,000 or more within the State's fiscal year shall have an audit made for that year. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations," was published in the Federal Register on June 30, 1997. The Circular implements the Single Audit Act amendments of 1996. State agencies that receive less than \$300,000 within the State's fiscal year shall have an audit made in accordance with Federal laws and regulations governing the programs in which they participate.

3. *Records.* Financial records, including all documents to support entries on accounting records to substantiate charges to each grant, must be kept available to personnel authorized to examine EPA grant accounts. All records must be maintained for three years from the date of submission of the annual financial status report. If questions still remain, such as those raised as a result of an audit, related records should be retained until the matter is completely resolved.

